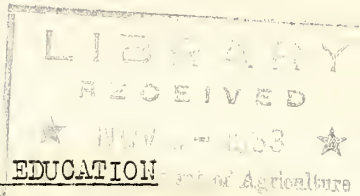


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HOW JUDGING CONTRIBUTES TO THE 4-H CLUB MEMBER'S EDUCATION Department of Agriculture

A radio talk by Miss Florence Hall, Extension Service, in the National Farm and Home Hour Saturday, September 2, 1933, and broadcast by a network of 58 associate NCO radio stations.

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While Rex Wisley was speaking of his judging work it occurred to me that judging is something we all do every day, though we may not realize it. We judge our neighbors' clothes, their front yards and their actions. We unconsciously compare the thing we judge with a mental picture we have set up as a desirable standard. When we buy a pair of shoes we try on several pair and finally decide on a pair that we think fits well, looks well and will wear well. One person's judgment may be better than another's, depending on his knowledge of points to look for and whether he knows what a good pair of shoes really is.

In 4-H Club work boys and girls are trained in judging in order that they may recognize good standards. They learn to judge dairy cows and other animals, corn, potatoes, canned products, baked goods, and clothing. To illustrate, let me tell you of an interesting experience I had last week at a county fair. The State club leader had just finished judging the 4-H Club exhibit of canned vegetables and fruit and was explaining the placings to 15 young canners. Their interest was keen in her reasons for the awards. They had watched her place the blue, red, and white ribbons and now were learning why those jars of canned goods placed first, second, and third. The State leader said: "As you know, good canned products should be firm, uniform, natural in color and without blemish. The liquid should be clear and every jar should be packed full, sealed perfectly, and be neat and attractive." The girls examined the jars and observed that those wearing the blue ribbon excelled in all these points. "But," the leader continued, "proof of the pudding is in the eating and we allow 50 points for flavor. Besides looking fine, these tomatoes and peaches taste as much like the fresh product as they possibly could." "And now," she concluded, "I believe we would all like to have Eleanor Baker tell us about this exhibit which has scored so high." Eleanor said to the group: "This is the third year I have had an exhibit at the county fair and each year my rating has improved. I believe this is because in our club we all practice judging at every meeting. There is always time for us to compare our work. We have score cards there and rate our own products and those of the others. Sometimes we bring to the meetings things we have made at home. We each judge them all and place them according to quality. So we learn to judge garments and baked goods as well as canned products. It's lots of fun and besides it certainly helps us to improve. I even judge every batch of biscuits I make at home and father says now that mine are almost as good as mother's."

At the same fair I met Dick Benson, a 4-H Club boy who said he was there with a judging team to judge dairy cows. "How did you learn to judge cows?" I asked Dick. "It was four years ago," he said, "when I first began to study that score card and compare our cows with it. Then Tom Johnson and I scored his cows the same way. Our club leader took us to different farms so we got lots of practice. I learned to look for the points that show whether a cow will have a high milk production. Now I have in mind a clear picture of just how a good cow should look. It takes plenty of study and work, but I tell you it's interesting

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to judge cows and place them according to quality. The most important part of it is we have to give our reasons for placing them in that order. That is what really makes a fellow think things out for himself. You should hear Tom Johnson and me practicing 'our reasons' on each other."

"Are you making practical use of this knowledge?" I asked Dick. "O, yes," he said. "Tom and I are both building up good herds of our own now."

Many States report that 4-H Club members are directly responsible for improving farm herds. The Maryland State club leader says: "About 15 per cent of the 19,300 registered dairy cattle in this State are owned by 4-H Club boys or former club members."

Eleanor Baker and Dick Benson are but two of the 40,000 club members who took part on judging teams throughout the country last year. Through this judging work 4-H club boys and girls learn to observe keenly and to appraise accurately farm animals and crops, canned and baked products, clothing and home furnishings. They build up a vivid mental picture of a good product which they use as a standard for comparison. This helps to develop good judgment which they may apply in many phases of life. Their experience in judging is leading to better ways in farming and homemaking. The ability which these young people acquire of measuring themselves and their products against a high standard is a strong factor in helping them to live up to that well known 4-H motto: "Make Your Best Better."

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